

PERIPHERAL DEVICE, PRINTING APPARATUS, DATA ACQUISITION  
METHOD, PRINT SUPPORT METHOD, PRINT SUPPORT SYSTEM,  
PORTABLE COMMUNICATION TERMINAL, AND PRINTING METHOD

This application is based upon and claims the benefit of priority from the prior Japanese Patent Applications No. 2000-258591, filed August 29, 2000, No. 2000-298617, filed September 29, 2000, No. 2000-298753, filed September 29, 2000, and No. 2000-398325, filed December 27, 2000, the entire contents of all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

15           1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a peripheral device, a printing apparatus, a data acquisition method, a print support method, a print support system, a portable communication terminal, and a printing method that support printing data provided from a server device via a network by a portable data processing terminal.

In recent years, in a portable communication terminal such as a mobile telephone or a PHS (Personal Handyphone System) terminal, there is provided a technique for capturing character data or image data

and the like provided by Web servers through Internet, thereby browsing the data by a browser. Such a portable communication terminal comprises a display device (a liquid crystal display) and its required minimal input device (key switches) because of its compactness, but does not comprise a printer.

In the meantime, a peripheral interface for connecting a peripheral device to a downstream of the terminal is provided at the above described portable communication terminal. The peripheral interface is designed on the assumption that the portable communication terminal is merely employed as a communication device (or a modem). Therefore, to the peripheral interface, a PDA (personal digital assistant), digital camera or a data processing unit such as a portable computer (a notebook type or book type computer) that do not have a communication function is connected as a peripheral device.

In this case, the portable communication terminal merely operates as a communication device, and data is transmitted and received between a data processing unit that is a peripheral device and a server on Internet. That is, the peripheral device is capable of receiving general-purpose data via the peripheral interface of the portable communication terminal. By this connection, for example, the data inputted by the data processing unit can be transmitted to a remote site via

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telephone itself operates as a data processing terminal, general-purpose data cannot be delivered to the peripheral device via the peripheral interface. Thus, there has been a problem that the general-purpose data cannot be easily printed.

In addition, printable data is only data that can be displayed on the display portion of the mobile telephone, and moreover, the data is printed as the data is displayed, and a complicated function for displaying printable data in an arbitrary layout or format cannot be provided.

The above fact applies to a data processing terminal other than a mobile telephone, and in particular, to a simplified portable data processing terminal comprising a communication function with a network.

In addition, apart from the above described print processing, for example, with respect to music data (such as MP3) as well, even if an attempt is made to reproduce music data downloaded by the portable communication terminal by a reproduction apparatus connected to the peripheral interface, such music data cannot be delivered to the reproduction apparatus. Thus, a problem similar to the above described problem occurs.

#### BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to

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provide a peripheral device, a printing apparatus,  
a data acquisition method, a print support method,  
a print support system, a portable communication  
terminal, and a printing method capable of easily  
5 utilizing data browsed on a portable communication  
terminal by an external device connected to a portable  
communication terminal, and capable of carrying out  
printing operation in an arbitrary format set by a user  
by a printing apparatus connected to the portable  
10 communication terminal.

According to one aspect of the present invention,  
there is provided a peripheral device capable of being  
connected to a portable communication terminal  
accessible to a server device on a network, the  
15 peripheral device comprising:

an interface configured to be connected to the  
portable communication terminal; and  
an access device configured to access the server  
device by a circuit connection function of the portable  
20 communication terminal and download data registered in  
the server device by the portable communication  
terminal.

According to another aspect of the present  
invention, there is provided a printing apparatus  
25 capable of being connected to, as a peripheral device,  
a portable communication terminal accessible to a  
server device on a network, the printing apparatus

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comprising:

an interface configured to be connected to the portable communication terminal;

an access device configured to access the server  
5 device by a circuit connection function of the portable communication terminal and download data registered in the server device by the portable communication terminal; and

a printer configured to print the data downloaded  
10 by the access device.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a data acquisition method comprising:

connecting a portable communication terminal to a  
15 server device on a network;

registering in the server device data to be acquired by a peripheral device connected to the portable communication terminal which is selected among from browsable data provided by the server device and  
20 disconnecting the portable communication terminal from the server device;

connecting the portable communication terminal to the server device by a peripheral device when the peripheral device is connected to the portable  
25 communication terminal, using a circuit connection function of the portable communication terminal; and  
downloading data registered in the server device

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to the peripheral device.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a print support method comprising:

5       receiving printer identification information for identifying a printer connected to a portable communication terminal from the portable communication terminal via a network;

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10       acquiring data targeted for printing specified by the portable communication terminal;

      generating print data for printing the acquired data targeted for printing by the printer based on the printer identification information and the acquired data targeted for printing; and

15       transmitting the generated print data to the portable communication terminal via the network.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a print support method comprising:

20       receiving printer identification information for identifying a printer connected to a portable communication terminal and printing condition for printing data target for printing data targeted for printing from the portable communication terminal via  
25       a network;

      acquiring the data targeted for printing;  
      changing the data targeted for printing based on

the received printing condition; and

transmitting a printer driver corresponding to [a  
printer specified by] the printer identification  
information and the changed data targeted for printing  
5 to the portable communication terminal via the network.

According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a print support system comprising:

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        a data processing unit for a print support;
10      at least one portable communication terminal
        connected to the data processing unit via a network;
        and

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a printer connected to the portable communication terminal, wherein the portable communication terminal comprises:

a transmitter which transmits printer identification information for identifying the printer to the data processing unit; and

a device which notifies the data processing unit  
20 of data targeted for printing and printing condition,  
the data processing unit comprises:

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a device which acquires the data targeted for
printing notified by the portable communication
terminal;

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25           a device which changes the acquired data targeted  
for printing in accordance with the printing condition  
notified by the portable communication terminal;





printing notified by the portable communication terminal;

5 a device which changes the acquired data targeted for printing in accordance with the printing condition notified by the portable communication terminal;

10 a transmitter which transmits a printer driver corresponding to a printer specified by the printer identification information and the changed data targeted for printing to the portable communication terminal via the network, and the portable communication terminal further comprises:

receiver which receives the printer driver and the changed data targeted for printing transmitted from the data processing unit;

15 a memory which stores the received printer driver and the changed data targeted for printing

20 a device which generates print data for printing the stored changed data targeted for printing by the printer based on the stored changed data targeted for printing by means of the stored printer driver; and

a transmitter which transmits the generated print data to the printer.

25 According to still another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a portable communication terminal capable of accessing to a server device on a network and downloading data provided by the server device, the portable communication terminal comprising:

an interface for connecting an external device;  
an acquisition device which acquires from the  
server device, a data processing program that  
corresponds to the external device connected to the  
5 interface; and

a transfer device which processes data downloaded  
from the server device by means of the data processing  
program acquired by the acquisition means and transmits  
the processed data to the external device connected to  
10 the interface.

According to still another aspect of the present  
invention, there is provided a data acquisition method  
for accessing to a server device on a network by a  
portable communication terminal and acquiring data  
15 provided by the server device by the portable  
communication terminal, the method comprising:

acquiring the data provided by the server device;  
acquiring a data processing program that  
corresponds to an external device connected to the  
20 portable communication terminal from the server device;  
and

processing data provided by the server device by  
means of the data processing program, and transferring  
the processed data to the external device connected to  
25 the portable communication terminal.

According to still another aspect of the present  
invention, there is provided a printing method



registered in the print service server;

FIG. 5 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of a portable communication terminal;

FIG. 6 is a flow chart illustrating a printer operation;

FIG. 7 is a sequence chart illustrating an operation of the first embodiment;

FIGS. 8A and 8B are block diagrams showing modifications of the first embodiment;

FIG. 9 is a schematic block diagram showing a print support service system according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 10 shows an example of a homepage of the print support service server;

FIG. 11 is a view showing a plurality of programs executed by the print support service server and associated data;

FIG. 12 is a block diagram showing a schematic configuration of a portable communication terminal and a printer;

FIGS. 13A and 13B are schematic views exemplifying modes of connection between the portable communication terminal and the printer;

FIG. 14 is a schematic flow chart of a print object data acquisition routine;

FIG. 15 is a view showing the contents of printer identification information;

FIG. 16 is a schematic flow chart of a printer selection routine;

FIG. 17 is a schematic flow chart of a print routine;

5        FIG. 18 is a view showing a relationship between the number of pixels for print object data and a print size;

FIG. 19A is a view showing the printing condition specification screen;

10       FIGS. 19B and 19C are views showing the various print results;

FIGS. 20A and 20B are views showing other examples of the printing condition specification screen;

15       FIG. 21 is a schematic block diagram showing a print support service system according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 22 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of the print support service server;

20       FIG. 23 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of the portable communication terminal;

FIG. 24 is a flow chart illustrating a printer operation;

FIG. 25 is a sequence chart illustrating an entire operation of the third embodiment;

25       FIG. 26 is a block diagram showing a wireless connection between the portable communication terminal and the printer according to the fifth embodiment of

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the present invention;

FIG. 27 is a sequence chart showing an example of procedures for establishing a wireless link;

FIGS. 28A and 28B are sequence charts showing examples of procedures for disconnecting (releasing) a wireless link;

FIG. 29 is a sequence chart showing an execution timing of establishing and disconnecting a wireless link shown in FIGS. 27 and 28 in the case of the first embodiment (FIG. 7);

FIG. 30 is a sequence chart showing an execution timing of establishing and disconnecting a wireless link shown in FIGS. 27 and 28 in the case of the fourth embodiment (FIG. 25);

FIG. 31 is a block diagram showing a schematic configuration of a charger having a printer according to the sixth embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. 32 is a perspective view showing an external view of the charger.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

An embodiment of a peripheral device, printing apparatus, data acquisition method, print support method, print support system, portable communication terminal, and printing method according to the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

# First Embodiment

FIG. 1 is a schematic block diagram showing a print support system according to the first embodiment of the present invention. A portable communication terminal 1 is utilized by a general user and is an example of a data processing terminal. The portable terminal 1 used here denotes a portable telephone terminal making wireless communication using a telephone circuit. This terminal 1 includes a telephone terminal employing any system such as called a cellular phone or PHS (personal handyphone system). A portable communication terminal 1 comprises a liquid crystal display or dial keys and the like.

The portable communication terminal 1 communicates with a base station 3 via a wireless channel, thereby making conversation or data communication via a mobile communication network 2 such as Internet. In addition, the portable communication terminal 1 accesses to a print support service server 40 via the mobile communication network 2, browses image data provided by the print support service server 40 by a browser, and specifies desired image data for printout.

In addition, the portable communication terminal 1 comprises a peripheral interface (not shown in FIG. 1), and is connectable with a printer 20 that is a peripheral device (described later). The portable communication terminal 1 operates a communication





the printer 20 is portable by the user, and is driven by a battery (a primary battery or a secondary battery). FIGS. 2A and 2B are block diagrams showing examples of a schematic configuration of the printer

5 20. The printer 20 is directly connected to a peripheral interface connector 10 of the portable communication terminal 1, as shown in FIG. 2A or is connected via a predetermined cable 11, as shown in FIG. 2B. As the printer 20, there are employed a

10 monochrome printer, a color printer, and a label printer or the like according to its use. In addition, printable data may include privacy (prominent person) data, stock market data, gamble data, E-mail, and name card data or any other item of data that can be

15 provided from the server side as well as image data.

The printer 20 comprises a mobile telephone peripheral interface 12, mobile telephone data communication protocol processing portion 13, and printer function portion 14, as shown in FIGS. 2A

20 and 2B. The mobile telephone peripheral interface 12 is intended to be connected to a peripheral interface (not shown) of the portable communication terminal 1. The mobile telephone data communication protocol processing portion 13 causes the portable communication

25 terminal 1 to operate as a communication device (modem), and carries out protocol processing for connecting with the print service server 1 via

Internet 4. It is desirable that the mobile telephone data communication protocol processing portion 13 be achieved by software in order to absorb communication protocols that differ from each other depending on each manufacturer's portable communication terminal, and is made available by changing software components.

The printer 20 is connected to the portable communication terminal 1. When a print button 15 shown in FIG. 1 is pressed, the printer 20 accesses to the print support service server 40 via the mobile communication network 2 or Internet 4 through the portable communication terminal 1 by the mobile telephone data communication protocol processing portion 13 so as to download image data registered in advance by the portable communication terminal 1. The printer function portion 14 comprises a print mechanism that converts the downloaded image data into print data by its own printer driver, and printing the data on a form.

The print support service server 40 is a print support service server owned by a service company for executing print support service according to the present invention. The print support service server 40 is connected to the mobile communication network 2 via a transmission control portion (not shown), and communicable with the portable terminal 1 via the mobile communication network 2. The print support

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an organization who executes a print support service as to provision of data targeted for printing such as image data or document data targeted for print services to the print support service server 40. In the figure, although only one associate server 50 is shown, in general, the associate servers 50 are connected to Internet 4.

In the first embodiment, a print support service is provided to data targeted for printing, primarily provided by the associate server 50. This service can also be provided for data targeted for printing, the data being provided by a server that belongs to a non-associate organization other than associate server 50. Hereinafter, a description is given with respect to execution of print service for the portable communication terminal 1. The present invention is applicable to another simplified mobile telephone such as PHS. Further, the present invention is also applicable to a data processing terminal such as a personal computer having a communication function other than a mobile telephone, and in particular, is suitably applicable to a portable, simplified data processing terminal.

Now, an operation of the above described embodiment will be described here. FIG. 3 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of the print support service server 40. FIG. 4 is a conceptual view showing

image data registered in the print support service  
server 40. FIG. 5 is a flow chart illustrating  
an operation of the portable communication terminal 1.  
FIG. 6 is a flow chart illustrating a printer  
operation.

An operation of the print support service server  
40 will be described here. A caller's number is  
acquired (step S10) when the print support service  
server 40 is accessed by the portable communication  
terminal 1, and it is determined whether or not an  
image data download request is made (step S12). If no  
download request is made, image data is displayed as  
thumb nail on the portable communication terminal 1 so  
that the data can be browsed (step S14). Next, it is  
determined whether or not the portable communication  
terminal 1 supplies a register instruction (step S16).  
When the register instruction is supplied, as shown in  
FIG. 5, such instruction is associated with the  
caller's number, and a selected image is registered  
(step S18). In an example shown in FIG. 5, image data  
"FILE0001. jpg", "FILE0002. jpg", and "FILE0003. jpg"  
are registered relevant to the caller's number  
"090-\*\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*". On the other hand, if the portable  
communication terminal 1 makes a download request, the  
registered image data that corresponds to the caller's  
number is transmitted to the requested portable  
communication terminal 1 (step S20).

Now, an operation of the portable communication terminal 1 will be described here. The portable communication terminal 1 first registers a telephone number (and/or URL (Uniform Resource Locator)) for connecting with the print support service server 40 in a memory dial of the portable communication terminal 1 (step S30). The registry name is assigned by a specific character string, for example, "\*\*\*\* print service". Next, the portable communication terminal 1 solely accesses to the print support service server 40 by utilizing the memory dial (step S32). From among a plurality of images provided by the print support service server 40, selection and processing (such as reduction, enlargement, or clipping) of a desired print image item is carried out on the display portion of the portable communication terminal 1 (step S34). Next, a register instruction is supplied to the print support service server 40 (step S36), and then, the portable communication terminal 1 is disconnected from the server 40 (step S38).

Now, an operation of the printer 20 will be described here. In the printer 20, it is determined whether or not the print button 15 is pressed (step S40). When the print button 15 is pressed, a memory dial of the portable terminal 1 read. Then, a specific character string ("\*\*\*\* print service") is searched for, and the telephone number (and/or URL) of the print

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support service server 40 is acquired (step S42).  
Then, the printer 20 accesses to the print support  
service server 40 via the network 4 such as Internet  
through the portable communication terminal 1 by the  
5 mobile telephone data communication protocol processing  
portion 13 (step S44).

Next, the printer 20 transmits a download request  
to the print support service server 40 (step S46).  
The printer 20 receives image data transmitted from  
10 the print support service server 40 in response to  
the download request (step S48). The image data is  
registered in advance by the portable communication  
terminal 1. The printer 20 prints out on a form by the  
printer function portion 14, the image data downloaded  
15 from the print support service server 40 (step S50).  
After the printing has been completed, the printer 20  
is temporarily disconnected from the portable  
communication terminal 1 (step S52).

FIG. 7 is a sequence chart illustrating an entire  
20 operation of the above described embodiment. A user  
first registers the telephone number (and/or URL) for  
connecting with the print support service server 40  
in the memory dial of the portable communication  
terminal 1. The portable communication terminal 1  
25 is solely connected to the print support service  
server 40. From among a plurality of image data items  
provided by the print support service server 40,



selection and processing (reduction, enlargement, or clipping) of a desired print image item is carried out at the display portion of the portable communication terminal 1. Thereafter, the portable communication terminal 1 is temporarily disconnected from the print support service server 40. The print support service server 40 manages the caller's number from the portable communication terminal 1 and the selected image data to be associated with each other.

10       Next, the user connects the portable communication terminal 1 to the printer 20, and presses the print button 15. The printer 20 reads a memory dial from the portable communication terminal 1, searches for a specific character string ("\*\*\* print service"), and  
15       acquires the telephone number (and/or URL) of the print support service server 40. Then, by the mobile telephone data communication protocol processing portion 13, the printer 20 accesses to the print support service server 40 via Internet 4 through the  
20       portable communication terminal 1 in accordance with the acquired telephone number (and/or URL) of the print support service server 40. The printer 20 requests the print support service server 40 to download the image data registered in advance by the portable  
25       communication terminal 1.

      The print support service server 40 specifies a user (a portable communication terminal 1) according to

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communication terminal 1 and the printer 20.

In an example shown in FIG. 8B, when the portable communication terminal 1 and the printer 20 are connected with each other via the cable 11, the peripheral interface 12 and the mobile telephone data communication protocol processing portion 13 are mounted on an adapter 101 for connecting the cable 11 to the portable communication terminal 1. This makes it possible to ensure cost reduction of the printer 20 itself.

Further, various types of printers can be used with the portable communication terminal 1, since the printer driver converts the downloaded image data into print data for respective printers.

Although the first embodiment has described only the printer 20 as a peripheral device to be connected with the portable communication terminal 1, such peripheral devices is applicable to a reproduction apparatus for reproducing music data, a display device for displaying image data or character data with high resolution and with large screen, and a large capacity storage device having a large storage capacity and storing a variety of data or the like.

Other embodiments of the peripheral device, printing apparatus, data acquisition method, print support method, print support system, portable communication terminal, and printing method according

to the present invention will be described. The same portions as those of the first embodiment will be indicated in the same reference numerals and their detailed description will be omitted.

5 Second Embodiment

FIG. 9 is a schematic block diagram showing a print support system according to the second embodiment of the present invention. In the second embodiment, a print support service server 40B can modify data targeted for printing in accordance with a printing condition (such as a form size or a print format used in the printer 30) specified by a user from a mobile telephone 60. In addition, the print support service server 40B can generate print data to be printed from data targeted for printing after converted by the printer 30, and then, transmit the generated data to the mobile telephone 60.

In the print support service server 40B, as shown in FIG. 11, as programs for executing print support services, a print object data acquisition routine 41, print object data reception routine 42, printer selection routine 43, and print routine 44 are provided, and are stored in storage regions, respectively.

In the print support service server 40B, printer drivers 45 are further stored in a predetermined storage region. The printer drivers 45 include

Each of the printer drivers 45a, 45b, ... 45e stores and maintains specification data on the corresponding printer. For example, the printer driver corresponding to a label printer maintains specification data such as a plurality of label widths (for example, 48 mm and 24 mm) available for use in the label printer and print resolution (for example, 200 dpi) or the like. The printer driver corresponding to a laser printer includes specification data concerning form sizes (for example, B5, A4, B4) available for use in the laser printer and printer resolution (for example, 600 dpi) or the like. The print support service server 40B includes printer identification information 46. A description of the data will be given later.

20           The mobile telephone 60 comprises a function for  
directly transferring to the printer 30 print data  
received from the print support service server 40B,  
and then, executing printing of the received print  
data based on the print data. When the print data size  
25           is too large to receive by a single reception,  
transmission of the subsequent portion of print data by  
the print support service server 40B and reception and



on-hook/off-hook, a volume switch for changing a voice output and the like. The controller 67 controls the entire apparatus in accordance with a predetermined program. Specifically, the controller 67 exchanges  
5 digital data with the printer 30 via the I/F 71.

The ROM 68 stores a program executed by the controller 67 or a variety of parameters and the like. The RAM 69 stores a communication program for  
10 controlling signal transmission to/reception from the mobile communication network 2 caused by the mobile telephone 60 and a transfer control program for executing data transfer to the printer 30 or the like via the I/F 71.

The display device 70 comprises a liquid display,  
15 and displays an operation mode, a variety of data such as telephone number and conversion time, received image data, text data or the like under the control of the controller 67. The I/F 71 is a peripheral interface for connecting a device (printer 30 in this case) with  
20 a peripheral of the mobile telephone 60.

Unlike the first embodiment, the printer 30 is a general printing apparatus, and does not have a function (printer driver) for conversion into print data. The printer 30 comprises a mobile telephone  
25 peripheral interface 31 and a printer function portion 32. The mobile telephone peripheral interface 31 is connected to the I/F 71 that is a peripheral

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interface of the mobile telephone 60. The printer function portion 32 comprises a print mechanism for printing out on a form the print data transmitted from the mobile telephone 60.

5           The printer 30 is directly connected to the peripheral interface connector of the mobile telephone 60 as shown in FIG. 13A or is connected to via a predetermined cable 75 as shown in FIG. 13B. According to its use, a monochrome printer, a color printer, or  
10          a label printer and the like is available as the printer 30. In addition, printable data may include privacy (prominent person) data, stock market data, gamble data, E-mail, and name card data or any other item of data that can be provided from the server side  
15          as well as image data.

Briefly, a print support service is executed as follows. The user operates his mobile telephone 60 to access the print support service server 40B via the mobile communication network 2. Data targeted for  
20          printing such as desired image data or document data is specified for this server 40B, and acquisition of the print object data is requested (#1). For example, when the user attempts to print an image of a specific character or a specific document, the user specifies  
25          the image or document data, and requests its acquisition.

The print support service server 40B acquires

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finally obtained from the printer 30.

In this way, the processing required for printing is executed by the print support service server 40B.

Thus, even if a printer driver is not mounted on the mobile telephone 60, printing can be executed. In addition, the mobile telephone 60 itself may relay print data from the server 40B to the printer 30, and there is no need to execute special, burdensome processing. Further, even if the printer 30 connected to the mobile telephone 60 is changed in accordance with user movement, print data suitable to that printer can be supplied by the print support service server 40B. Thus, any printer can carry out printing.

In the present print support system, as described above, apart from data stored in the associate server 50 on Internet 4, image data acquired by the digital camera 31 and captured by the mobile telephone 60 or document data inputted by the user operating the mobile telephone 60 or a data processing unit connected thereto can be printed. In this case, the print support service server 40B acquires data targeted for printing from the mobile telephone 60. The print support service server 40B applies the same processing as that described previously to the acquired data, thereby generating print data, and then, transmitting the generated data to the mobile telephone 60.

Hereinafter, a description will be given with

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respect to the details on the print support service system and print support method according to the second embodiment. FIG. 10 shows a menu associated with the second embodiment, the menu being included in a homepage 400 of the print support service server 40B. When the print support service server 40B is accessed by the mobile telephone 60, this menu is displayed. When a user makes a request for acquiring desired data targeted for printing service from any of the associate servers 50, an item "1" is selected. When the user makes a request for receiving data targeted for printing by the mobile telephone 60, an item "2" is selected. When a printer for printing the acquired data or received data is selected, an item "3" is selected. When printing of the acquired data or received data is executed, an item "4" is selected. When any one of the items "1" to "4" is selected from the homepage 400, the print object data acquisition routine 41, print object data reception routine 42, printer selection routine 43, and print routine 44 are executed, respectively.

First, a user attempting to receive print support service operates the mobile telephone 60 to access the print support service server 40B. When the homepage 400 (FIG. 10) is displayed, if a request is made to acquire data targeted for printing from the associate server 50, the user selects a print object data





printer, laser beam printer (LBP), and ink jet printer or the like, for example. The model data 46b is provided for each printer type, and there are recorded identification information of models of a plurality of printers, each of which is available for use in the print support service server 40B, of a plurality of printers belonging to such type, for example, a pair of manufacturer name or model name.

The printer selection routine 43 is executed in accordance with the procedures shown in FIG. 16, for example. First, a printer selection screen is displayed by the mobile telephone 60 (step S430). Reference numeral 430a exemplifies the selection screen of the mobile telephone 60, where types of a plurality of printers and the identification number for each type that are available for use in the print support service server 40B are displayed.

The user can specify type of printer 30 (FIG. 9) connected to the mobile telephone 60 in use by specifying a proper method, for example, the identification number assigned to such type. Here, it is assumed that the printer 30 in use is a label printer. The label printer is light-weighted, is suitable to be portable, and is suitable to be used together with the mobile telephone 60. In recent years, a label printer capable of printing a color image is available.

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initiated (step S441).

In a conventional personal computer, a printer driver defined corresponding to a printer connected to the personal computer is initiated prior to executing printing of print object data. The printer driver performs processing required for printing with reference to the print object data, generates print data to be supplied to a printer, and supplies the print data to the printer.

Although the printer driver used in the present embodiment generates print data in the same manner as the conventional printer driver, the print data is transmitted to the mobile telephone 60 instead of being directly supplied to a printer (not shown) provided as accessories to the server 40B. That is, the printer driver is constructed so as to transmit to the mobile telephone 60 the print data via a communication program provided at the server 40B for executing communication with the mobile telephone 60 in order to execute printing by the printer 30 provided as accessories.

The following processing of the print routine 44 is executed by the initiated printer driver. Like the conventional printer driver, a printer driver for use in the present embodiment as well causes the mobile telephone 60 to display a screen for setting a printing condition when the driver is initiated, and prompts the user to input the printing condition (step S442).





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Specifically, a control code required for printing the print object data after converted by the printer 30 is determined, and the determined code is added to the converted print object data. The control code is a code for controlling a printing operation by the printer 30, and is generally a code specified to the printer 30.

The control code may be referred to as a print command or any other term. For example, if the print object data is image data as described above, a control  
15 code or the like for specifying a printing start position of an image to be printed is used as the printing condition.

During print data generation, image processing defined by the printer driver may be applied to the print object data after converted. For example, image processing suitable to an available printer or processing for modifying print object data according to the number of colors that are printable by the available printer can be carried out.

25           Thereafter, the printer driver requests a  
communication program to transmit the generated print  
data (step S445). The communication program transmits





on one page is stored in the printer buffer, a signal for requesting cancellation of transfer of print data is notified from the printer 30 to the controller 67. The controller 67 cancels transfer of print data in response to this cancellation request under the control of the transfer control program. At the same time, this cancellation request is further transferred to the communication program in the mobile telephone 60, and cancellation of transmission of the subsequent print data is requested.

At the time when the print object data stored in the printer buffer is printed, transfer of the subsequent print data is requested from the printer 30 to the controller 67, and this request is notified to the printer driver in the print support service server 40B. As a result, transfer of the subsequent print data from the print support service server 40B to the mobile telephone 60 is restarted. Then, similar operation is repeated. In thus way, the image data stored in the associate server 50 is printed by the printer 30 connected to the mobile telephone 60.

If the print object data requested by the user is document data, it is possible to specify a printing condition that is different from a case of image data as a printing condition specified during execution of the print routine 44 (FIG. 15). For example, if the printer 30 is a label printer, a format specification

screen is further displayed after a label width  
specification screen 442a and a print size  
specification screen 442b, making it possible to cause  
the user to specify a format such as number of lines  
5 printed on one page.

FIG. 19A shows an example of such a format  
specification screen 442c. Here, the number of  
characters in a horizontal line, the number of lines,  
type of character font, and size of character font or  
10 the like are specified by the user in accordance with  
numeric input or employing a selection menu. FIG. 19B  
shows an example of the print result when a small size  
of character font is specified on a label. FIG. 19C  
shows an example of the print result when a large size  
15 of character font is specified on a label.

If the print object data is document data, and  
a printing condition concerning format is specified as  
a printing condition, at the data conversion step S443  
such a printing condition is changed so as to be  
20 coincident with a format in which disposition of  
a character string that configures print object data is  
specified. If a character font is specified, the font  
is changed as well.

Thereafter, at the print data generation step  
25 S444, a control code for printing print object data in  
accordance with a printing condition is added to  
a character code string that configures document data,



and print data is generated. For example, a plurality of control codes specifying a printing start position, a character font, a character size, a character color or the like are inserted by each character code or by a plurality of character codes having the same printing style (format). When the print data is sent, the printer generates a bit map representative of individual character patterns in accordance with the control codes specified for the character code of the respective characters, and the generated bit map is used for printing. This bit map may be generated at the print data generation step S444.

FIGS. 20A and 20B shows an example of a printing condition that is specifiable when the printer 30 is a laser printer. In FIG. 20A, the printing form size is specified. In FIG. 20B, a page format is specified.

In place of the print object data stored in the associate server 50, the following method may be employed for the user to print document data inputted to the memory 23 by using the key input portion 22 of the portable communication terminal 1 or document data inputted to a data processing unit (not shown), or alternatively, image data obtained by image picking-up using the digital camera 31 connected to the mobile telephone 60. That is, when the homepage 400 (FIG. 10) of the print support service server 40B is displayed, the user selects print object data reception item "2".

As a result, the print object data reception routine 42 (FIG. 3) is initiated.

By execution of this routine 42, the document data inputted by using the key input portion 22 or document data inputted to a data processing unit (not shown), or alternatively, image data picked-up by the digital camera 31 is transmitted as print object data from the memory 23, digital camera 31, or alternatively, the data processing unit (not shown) to the print support service server 40B via the mobile telephone 60. Thereafter, the above described processing is applied to the print object data, print data is generated, the generated print data is transmitted to the printer 30 via the mobile telephone 60, and the transmitted data is printed.

In this manner, the user specified print object data can be easily printed by the printer 30 connected to the mobile telephone 60. Moreover, there is no need for the mobile telephone 60 to carry out data conversion of print object data according to a printing condition, and further, determination of control codes required for generating print data or the like. Therefore, a processing burden on the mobile telephone 60 is not so large.

#### Third Embodiment

In the second embodiment, the print data is generated in the print support service server 40B by



is changed according to the user specified printing condition. The print data generation step S444 is not executed. The print object data after converted, the data being obtained at the data conversion step S443, and the printer driver that corresponds to the printer specified by the printer selection routine 43, are transmitted from the print support service server 40B to the mobile telephone 60. The mobile telephone 60 receives the print object data after converted and the printer driver, and stores them in a buffer region of the RAM 69. Thereafter, communication between the print support service server 40B and the mobile telephone 60 is interrupted.

The user initiates the printer driver transmitted to the mobile telephone 60 by way of proper key operation. When the printer driver is initiated, it executes the print data generation step S444 for the received print object data after converted. In this way, print data is generated, and the generated data is stored in a proper buffer region in the RAM 69. Thereafter, the printer driver sequentially transmits the print data to the printer 30 via the transfer control program, and causes the printer to execute printing. The printer driver controls a timing of transferring the subsequent print data in response to a signal from the printer 30. In this way, generation and printing of print data is carried out offline.





a print service program downloaded from the print support service server 40C, and carries out browsing, processing, and selection or the like for image data, whereas it converts the image data into print data by the printer driver downloaded from the print support service server 40C so as to deliver the converted data to the printer 30.

In addition, in the fourth embodiment, the RAM 69 is employed as a working area for storing data generated due to the control of the controller 67, image data downloaded from the print support service server 40C, text data, and a variety of programs (including a printer detection program, a print service program, and a printer driver).

Now, an operation of the fourth embodiment will be described here. FIG. 22 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of the print support service server 40C. FIG. 23 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of the mobile telephone 60B. FIG. 24 is a flow chart illustrating an operation of the printer 30.

First, an operation of the print support service server 40C will be described with reference to FIG. 22. In the print support service server 40C, when it is accessed by the mobile telephone 60B, image data is displayed as a thumb nail so as to enable browsing at the mobile telephone 60B (step S510). Then, it is determined whether or not a print instruction is

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20  
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by the display unit is downloaded in advance, thereby making it possible for a display support service server to support a variety of reproduction apparatuses having their different specifications. It is possible to integrate the data format of image data provided by the display support service server.

#### Fifth Embodiment

Now, the fifth embodiment of the present invention will be described here. The fifth embodiment is applicable to the first to fourth embodiments, and is characterized in that data communication is made wirelessly between a portable communication terminal and a printer. FIG. 26 is a block diagram showing wireless communication between a portable communication terminal and a printer according to the fifth embodiment. The portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) comprises a short-distance wireless communication portion 200 connected via a peripheral interface or the like. On the other hand, the printer 20 (or 30) comprises a short-distance wireless communication portion 210 instead of the peripheral interface.

FIG. 27 is a sequence chart showing an example of procedures for establishing a wireless link. When the user depresses a predetermined button at the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B), a request for establishing a wireless link is transmitted from

the short-distance wireless communication portion 200 at the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) to the short-distance wireless communication portion 210 at the printer 20 (or 30). At the printer 20 (or 30), when a request for establishing a link is received, a password request is transmitted to the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B). At the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B), the user inputs a password, and transmits the inputted password to the printer 20 (or 30). The printer collates the transmitted password with a password being stored, and carries out authentication connection. If the password is coincident, the completion of connection is transmitted to the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B). In this manner, a wireless link between the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) and the printer 20 (or 30) is established. Thereafter, print data is transmitted from the short-distance wireless communication portion 200 at the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) to the short-distance wireless communication portion 210 at the printer 20 (or 30), whereby printing is carried out.

In the illustrative example, the wireless link establishment request is transmitted from the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) to the printer 20 (or 30). Conversely, it is possible that the printer

20 (or 30) transmits the wireless link establishment request to the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B). However, in this case, it is necessary to provide instruction means for supplying an instruction for transmitting a wireless link establishment request to the printer 20 (or 30) or input means for inputting a password for authentication connection at the printer 20 (or 30). As the instruction means, although it is considered that the user depressed a print button 15 provided at the printer 20 (or 30), for example, in general, the printer does not comprise an input device for ten numeric keys. Thus, there occurs a necessity of additionally providing input means for inputting a password, which is not realistic.

FIG. 28A and FIG. 28B are sequence charts each showing an example of procedures for disconnection (releasing) a wireless link. FIG. 28A shows an example wherein a wireless link release request is transmitted from the short-distance wireless communication portion at the portable communication terminal to the short-distance wireless communication portion at the printer, thereby disconnecting a wireless link. FIG. 28B shows an example wherein a wireless link release request is transmitted from the short-distance wireless communication portion at the printer to the short-distance wireless communication portion at the portable

communication terminal, thereby disconnecting a wireless link.

FIG. 29 is a sequence chart showing an execution timing of establishing and disconnecting a wireless link shown in FIGS. 27 and 28 in the first embodiment (FIG. 7). In addition, although the first embodiment has described an example wherein the user depressed a print button 15 provided at the printer 20, thereby printing is started, FIG. 29 shows an example wherein a predetermined button of the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) is depressed, thereby printing is started. In the case of wireless communication as well, the print button 15 of the printer 20 is pressed, thereby making it possible to start printing. However, in consideration of a case in which the printer 20 and the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) are distant from each other or a case in which the user operates the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) by a print data registration work for a server prior to actually starting printing, it is more usable for the user to press a button at the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B), whereby printing is started.

FIG. 30 is a sequence chart showing an execution timing of establishing and disconnecting a wireless link shown in FIGS. 27 and 28 in the fourth embodiment (FIG. 25). In the illustrative embodiment, wireless

link establishment processing is carried out twice at a timing A and a timing B. This is because a wireless link is disconnected while the user is browsing or processing an image, whereby an effect that power consumption of the mobile telephone 60B or printer 30 can be saved is expected. If an operation response is prioritized, it may be sufficient if wireless link establishment processing is carried out only once. In this case, a wireless link is established at the timing A shown in FIG. 30, and such link may be maintained up to the timing B'. Namely, link disconnecting processing at the timing A' and link establishment processing at the timing B is not carried out.

#### Sixth Embodiment

Now, the sixth embodiment of the present invention will be described here. The sixth embodiment is applicable to the first to fifth embodiments, and wherein a printer is provided at a charger of a portable communication terminal. FIG. 31 is a block diagram showing a schematic configuration of a charger having a printer. FIG. 32 is a perspective view showing an external view of the charger. A charger 80 comprises a charger circuit 81, printer control circuit 82, a print mechanism 83, and a short-distance wireless communication portion 210. The charger circuit 81 rectifies a commercially available power supply, converts the rectified voltage into a predetermined



direct current voltage, and charges a secondary battery (not shown) incorporated in the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) placed on the charging base. The printer control circuit 82 prints the print data on a predetermined form by controlling the print mechanism 83. As shown in FIG. 32, the printed form 85 is ejected from the side (or top or front face) of the charger 80. The short-distance wireless communication portion 210 establishes a wireless link with the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B), thereby making data communication, as described in the fifth embodiment. In this case, the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) as well comprises a short-distance wireless communication portion 200, as described previously.

In the sixth embodiment, if the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) is placed on the charge base 80, the print data transmitted from the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) is received via an I/F 220. Alternatively, if the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) is not placed on the charge base 80, a wireless link is established by the short-distance wireless communication portion 200 of the portable communication terminal 1 (or 60, 60B) and the short-distance wireless communication portion 210 of the charger 80, print data is received by the wireless link, the print

mechanism 83 is controlled by the printer control circuit 82, and the data is printed on a predetermined form.

5       In the second, third, and fourth embodiments,  
it is desirable to produce a software that achieve  
a variety of functions in the mobile telephone 60B and  
a variety of programs (including a printer detection  
program, a print service program, and a printer driver)  
downloaded from the print support service server 40 in  
10   a Java language capable of operating the same program  
between devices with different platforms. In this way,  
the programs are produced in the Java language, thereby  
making it possible to share the variety of programs  
(including a printer driver) in common without  
15   considering a difference from the mobile telephone 60B.

          In addition, in the first to sixth embodiments,  
although a mobile telephone has been used as a portable  
communication terminal, the present invention is  
applicable to any other data processing terminal  
20   without being limited thereto. In particular, the  
present invention is effective for use in a simplified  
data processing terminal capable of being portable.  
The other data processing terminal may be used after  
connected to Internet instead of being connected to a  
25   mobile communication network.

Additional advantages and modifications will  
readily occur to those skilled in the art. Therefore,

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the present invention in its broader aspects is not limited to the specific details, representative devices, and illustrated examples shown and described herein. Accordingly, various modifications may be made  
5 without departing from the spirit or scope of the general inventive concept as defined by the appended claims and their equivalents.

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